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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 08 KABUL 1438

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FINAL SENTENCE OF PARA 3A (SUMMARY)

MILITARY ADDRESSEES ALSO SOR POLADS; PARIS ALSO SOR USDAO;
DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR NEA/PAB, MR. BRUNO; THE HAGUE FOR
A-DAM AND R-DAM

E.O. 12356: DECL 8/16/93

TAGSZ-?ASEC, MOPS, MCAP, PHUM, PINR, PINS, PROP, SREF, UR, AF
SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT AUG 10-17, 1987

REF: KABUL 1382

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION MAY BE BRIEFED TO JOURNALISTS
EXCEPT WHERE OTHERWISE NOTED. (NOTE TO BRIEFERS IN ISLAMABAD,
PESHAWAR AND NEW DELHI: YOU MAY WISH TO CONSIDER CONCENTRATING
ON SUMMARIES AND SELECTED EXCERPTS FROM PARAS 4 AND 5.)

3. SUMMARY:

(1) TO BRIEFED TO PRESS:

SOVIET FORCES CONCLUDED A WEEK-LONG TEEP OPERATIO
IN THE SHOMALI, THE 60 KM LONG BASIN IMMEDIATELY NORTH
OF UABUL. THE CAMPAIGN, BY ALL ACCOUNTS THE MOST
DESTRUCTIVE IN THE REGION SINCE THE SOVIET INVASION,
GENERATED THOUSANDS OF REFUGEES AS RESIDENTS OF THE
FORMERLY RICH AGRICULTURAL AREA FLED INDISCRIMINATE SOVIET
ARTILLERY/ROCKET AND AERIAL BOMBARDMENT OF VILLAGES
AND FARMLANDS AS WELL AS MUJAHIDIN STRONGHOLDS.
MUJAHIDIN AND SOVIET FORCES SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES
WHILE DRA FORCES, WHICH TOOK A SECONDARY ROLE, LOST MANY
TROOPS THROUGH DESERTION. IN KANDAHAR, MUJAHIDIN, DESPITE
A TWO-MONTH SOVIET/DRA OFFENSIVE, REMAIN IN THEIR STRONGHOLDS,
REPORTEDLY STRONGER OVERALL THAN ONE YEAR AGO. REPORTS
FROM TRAVELERS SPEAK OF DETERIORATING REGIME CONTROL IN
PROVINCIAL CAPITALS OF PARWAN, GHAZNI, BAGHLAN AND
BADAKHSHAN. PRIME MINISTER KESHTMAND MAY BE IN
MOSCOW ON A THUS FAR UNDISCLOSED VISIT, POSSIBLY RELATED TO
"NEW STEPS" REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED BETWEEN GORBACHEV AND AJIB
WHILE THE LATTER WAS IN MOSCOW. THE REGIME CONFIRMS MUJAHIDIN
DOWNING OF AN-26 IN THE KHOST AREA. REGIME CLAIMS THAT THE
AIRCRAFT CARRIED CIVILIANS IS REGARDED WITH SUSPICION, GIVEN
THE REGIME'S TRACK RECORD OF MIS-LABELING DOWNED MILITARY
AIRCRAFT AS CIVILIAN IN THE RECENT PAST. IN LATE UPDATE,
A SOVIET SOLDIER STRANGLED A YOUTH AND
SHOT ANOTHER BOY THIS AM IN THE CITY'S CROWDED "FRUIT BAZAAR STREET."

(3) NOT TO BE BRIEFED TO PRESS:

SENIOR DRA OFFICIALS REPORTEDLY ARE CONCERNED OVER
THE CURRENT UNIMPEDED FLOW OF WEAPONS AND SUPPLIES TO
MUJAHIDIN IN THE NORTH. THERE ARE ?HST B?OC-COURCED

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REPORTS THAT FOREIGN MINISTER WAKIL IS GRAVELY ILL AND MAY BE SUFFERING FROM CANCER. UNICEF HAS QUIETLY BEGUN EXPENDITURES ASSOCIATED WITH ITS PLAN TO INOCULATE CHILDREN IN THREE PROVINCES. THE DRA'S BAKHTAR AIRLINES REPORTEDLY WILL SHORTLY INAUGURATE FREIGHT AND PASSENGER SERVICE TO KUWAIT. THERE ARE REPORTS OF SOVIET EMPLOYMENT OF CBW IN GHAZNI. END SUMMARY.

4. KABUL PYROTECHNICS AND SECURITY:

KABUL RESIDENTS HEARD THE SOUNDS OF BATTLE IN THE SHOMALI THROUGHOUT THE WEEK. MOST NIGHTS ARTILLERY, ROCKET AND AERIAL BOMBARDMENTS UNLEASHED BY SOVIET AND DRA FORCES ILLUMINATED THE SHOMALI IN WHAT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE SOVIET OFFENSIVE IN THE AREA SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR. (SEE PARA 6A FOR DETAILS). DIPLOMATS REPORT THE FOLLOWING BASED ON OBSERVATIONS FROM KABUL:

--AUGUST 9: ROCKET STRUCK NEAR THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AT MIDNIGHT; BETWEEN 1900 AND 2030 BRIEF FLASHES IN THE SKY IN THE DIRECTION OF SHAKA DARA FOLLOWED BY A MASSIVE GLOW FROM GROUND LEVEL AND A DEEP-LOUD ROAR; AT THE SAME TIME, SMALL ARMS AND MACHINE GUN FIRE IN THE DASHTI CHANTARA AREA NORTH WEST OF THE KHAIR KHANA PASS; AT 2200 MULTIPLE ROCKET LAUNCHER FIRE FROM DASHTI CHANTARA AREA, POSSIBLY TOWARD PAGHMAN.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 06 KABUL 1438

--AUGUST 10: ARTILLERY AUDIBLE TO THE WEST BETWEEN 2235-2315.

--AUGUST 11: POSSIBLE INCOMING ROCKETS IN WESTERN KABUL AT 0430; MULTIPLE ROCKET FIRE FROM NEAR DARULAMAN, POSSIBLY TARGETING PAGHMAN.

--AUGUST 12: ARTILLERY FIRE TO THE NORTHWEST AT MID-DAY; FLASHES SOUTHWEST OF KABUL SUBSEQUENTLY REPORTED BY AN AFGHAN SOURCE TO BE OUTGOING FIRE FROM TAPE TAJBEK TOWARD PAGHMAN.

--AUGUST 13: ARTILLERY FIRE FROM SOUTH KABUL IN THE AFTERNOON; POSSIBLY DIRECTED AT PAGHMAN; ARTILLERY, ROCKET AND POSSIBLY AERIAL BOMBING IN THE SHOMALI BETWEEN 2005 AND 2035; FLASHES NOT ACCOMPANIED BY SOUND TO THE SOUTHWEST FROM 2030 TO 2115; SEVERAL FLASHES OF LIGHT TO THE WEST, POSSIBLY CAUSED BY INCOMING ROCKETS IN THE KARGHA AREA;

HEAVY GROUND-TO-AIR ILLUMINATION FLARE ACTIVITY TO THE SOUTH THROUGH MOST OF THE NIGHT; RUMBLING TO THE NORTHEAST, POSSIBLY CAUSED BY OUTGOING ARTILLERY.

--AUGUST 14: HEAVY MULTIPLE ROCKET LAUNCHER FIRE AND ARTILLERY FROM POSITIONS NORTHEAST OF KARGHA LAKE BETWEEN 0630 AND 0700; ARTILLERY FIRE FROM THE AIRPORT AREA AT 1440; ARTILLERY FIRE?? T? NORTHWEST BETWEEN 1600 AND 1715; FLASHES FROM A BOMBARDMENT TO THE NORTH BETWEEN 2000 AND 2100 AND SOUND OF EXPLOSIONS TO THE NORTHWEST BETWEEN 2300 AND 2400.

--AUGUST 15: BETWEEN 0100 AND 0300 VERY HEAVY ARTILLERY AND OTHER FIRE TO THE NORTH; AT 0615 ARTILLERY FIRE TO THE WEST.

5. MILITARY MOVEMENT IN THE KABUL AREA:

(A) AIR: AN APPARENT AVIATION FUEL SHORTAGE (SEE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS PARA 20 FOR DETAILS) MAY HAVE AFFECTED AIR TRAFFIC ENTERING AND LEAVING KABUL. WHILE HELICOPTER FLIGHTS FROM KABUL TO THE NORTH WERE FREQUENT, THERE WAS DECLINE IN THE VOLUME OF SUCH WEST-BOUND TRAFFIC. DURING THE WEEK 26 IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED, DOWN SLIGHTLY FROM THE 29 OBSERVED THE PREVIOUS WEEK. DIPLOMATS OBSERVED THE FOLLOWING AIR MOVEMENT:

--AUGUST 10: TWO IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED.

--AUGUST 11: SEVEN IL76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED.

--AUGUST 12: THREE IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED.

-- AUGUST 13: TWO IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED. AT 1640 TWELVE MI-8 HELICOPTERS ARRIVED AT KABUL AIRPORT FROM THE SUTH.

--AUGUST 14: FOUR IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED. AT 0800 TWELVE SOVIET HELICOPTERS (EIGHT MI-8'S AND FOUR MI-24'S) ARRIVED AT KABUL AIRPORT FROM THE NORTH. ALL FLEW AT LOW ALTITUDE.

--AUGUST 15: SIS IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED. AT 0750 A TU-134 DEPARTED KABUL DISPENSING FLARES AS IT SPIRALED TO SAFE ALTITUDE. FOUR MI-24'S ESCORTED THE FLIGHT. AS IT LEFT KABUL AIRSPACE, A CONVOY OF APPROXIMATELY 25 VIP CARS INCLUDING A NUMBER OF MILITARY VEHICLES LEFT THE AIRPORT.

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THE TU-134 MAY HAVE BEEN ONE OBSERVED FOR SEVERAL DAYS AT THE AIRPORT. AT 1105 AN AN-26 ESCORTED BY FOUR FLARE-DISPENSING MI-24'S DEPARTED.

--AUGUST 16: TWO IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED

(B) VEHICULAR MOVEMENT: FIGHTING IN THE SHOMALI BLOCKED TRAFFIC ON THE SALANG ROAD THROUGH MUCH OF THE WEEK AND MAY HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR A REPORTED SHORTAGE OF AVIATION FUEL WHICH PROMPTED CANCELLATION OF ONE OF THE TWICE-WEEKLY INDIAN AIRLINES FLIGHTS FROM NEW DELHI. (SEE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS PARA 20.) MOVEMENT OF MAJOR SOVIET UNITS OUT OF THE SHOMALI EARLY ON AUGUST 15 APPEARED TO SIGNAL THE CLOSE OF THE SOVIETS' CURRENT SHOMALI CAMPAIGN. DIPLOMATS OBSERVED THE FOLLOWING:

--AUGUST 9: A SOVIET CONVOY OF OVER 100 TRUCKS MOVED NORTH ON THE SALANG ROAD.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 08 KABUL 1438

--AUGUST 10: AT 0530 A PATROL OF FIVE SOVIET TRACKED ARMORED VEHICLES MOVED THROUGH THE-SHARE NAU SECTION OF KABUL. AT 0610 TWENTY FUEL TRUCKS AND MORE THAN 80 OTHER SOVIET TRUCKS ESCORTED BY BRDM'S STAGED NORTH ON THE SALANG. BETWEEN 1000 AND 1030 A DRA CONVOY CONTAINING 298 VEHICLES MOVED FROM THE PAGHMAN AREA TO THE SALANG ROAD. THE CONVOY INCLUDED 160 TRUCKS, 100 TRACKED ARMORED VEHICLES, TEN MEDICAL TRUCKS, TEN JEEPS, THREE COMMUNICATION TRUCKS AND A NUMBER OF TRUCKS FILLED WITH WOOD (FUEL) AND SHEEP.

--AUGUST 14: A SOVIET FUEL TRUCK WHICH VEERED INTO A DITCH CAUGHT FIRE AND BLOCKED PERIMETER ROAD TRAFFIC FOR OVER ONE HOUR. AT 1430 OVER FIFTY SOVIET FUEL TRUCKS (UNIT ID 1051) ENTERED KABUL VIA THE SALANG ROAD AND HEADED EAST ON PERIMETER ROAD.

--AUGUST 15: AT 0605 ELEMENTS OF SOVIET UNITS DEPLOYED OVER THE WEEK IN THE SHOMALI BEGAN TO RETURN TO KABUL. THE FIRST SEGMENT, CONTAINING BM-21 MULTIPLE ROCKET LAUNCHERS AND SEVERAL HUNDRED ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS AND TRUCKS, DROVE TO THE SOVIET BASE AT THE NORTHWEST END OF THE KABUL AIRPORT. SOME OF THE VEHICLES CARRIED AN AIRBORNE INSIGNIA. AT 0615 THREE SOVIET CONVOYS, INCLUDING A FUEL CONVOY (ID NO 1043); AN AMMO CONVOY (ID NO 1023); AND A CONVOY OF COVERED TRUCKS (ID NO 0012) CONVERGED ON THE SALANG ROAD HEADED NORTH. AT 1715 TWELVE MTLB'S (EACH TOWING AN ARTILLERY PIECE) PLUS TRUCK-TOWED ROCKET LAUNCHERS AND EIGHT BTR'S MOVED WEST ON PERIMETER ROAD. ALL WERE VERY DUSTY.

--COMBAT IN THE PROVINCES --

6. KABUL PROVINCE (SEE PARA'S 4, 5 FOR KABUL CITY DEVELOPMENTS): A SOVIET CAMPAIGN OF ARTILLERY AND ROCKET FIRE, SUPPLEMENTED BY BOMBING NORTH OF KABUL CITY, ACCORDING TO MULTIPLE SOURCES, HAS BEEN THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE IN THE REGION SINCE THE INVASION. SIGNIFICANT FIGHTING, THOUGH NOT ON THE SCALE OF THE CAMPAIGN TO THE NORTH, ALSO OCCURRED SOUTH OF KABUL. MEANWHILE, DESPITE INTENSE BOMBARDMENT, MUJAHIDIN POSITION TO THE WEST OF KABUL IN THE PAGHMAN AREA REMAINED FIRM.

(A) KABUL -NORTH:

--SHAPE OF THE BATTLE: SOVIET FORCES, ACCOMPANIED BY DRA UNITS, MOVED INTO THE SHOMALI ON AUGUST 7. REPORTS HAD INDICATED GROWING MUJAHIDIN STRENGTH IN THE AREA AS REFLECTED IN MUJAHIDIN AUGUST 4-5 PENETRATION INTO THE KHAIR KHANA PASS, THE NORTHERN ENTRANCE TO KABUL (PARA 6A, REFTEL), AND THE REPORTED AUGUST 6 MUJAHIDIN CAPTURE OF WPAEP SOVIET AND PDPA CADRE NEAR SHAKADARA. THIS GROWING STRENGTH AND THE THREAT IT POSED TO KABUL AND THE CITY'S VITAL SALANG ROAD LIFELINE MAY HAVE PROMPTED THE SOVIETS TO ATTEMPT THEIR LARGEST-YET SWEEP OF THE AREA. FIGHTING, WHICH STRETCHED FROM THE KHAIR ANA PASS TO KOH-I-DAMAN (IMMEDIATELY SOUTHWEST OF

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JABAL-OS-SARAJ, 0 KMS TO THE NORTH), REPORTEDLY WAS PARTICULARLY INTENSE IN THE KARIZ MIR - SHAKADARA AREA, THOUGH REPORTS OF EXTENSIVE DESTRUCTION IN ALL MAJOR SHOMALI TOWNS HAVE REACHED KABUL. SOVIET FORCES, WHICH CARRIED THE BRUNT OF THE FIGHTING (LEAVING THE DRA FORCES TO A SECONDARY ROLE POSITIONED TANKS AT 50-100 METER INTERVALS ALONG THE SALANG ROAD FROM THE KHAIR KHANA PASS NORTHWARD. DEPARTURE OF 12-CRAFT HELICOPTER FLIGHTS TO THE NORTH EARLY IN THE FIGHTING SUGGESTS THE SOVIETS MAY HAVE ATTEMPTED AIR-INSERTION OF FORCES, POSSIBLY TO ESTABLISH FORWARD BASES. FOR THE MOST PART, HOWEVER, THE SOVIET OFFENSIVE CONSISTED OF HEAVY, INDISCRIMINATE BOMBARDMENT, EMPLOYING MULTIPLE ROCKET LAUNCHERS, SELF-PROPELLED GUNS AND AERIAL BOMBING. IN ADDITION TO FIRING POSITIONS ALONG THE SALANG ROAD, THE SOVIETS ESTABLISHED A FIRING POSITION IN OR NEAR DASHTI CHANTARA (IMMEDIATELY NORTHWEST OF THE KHAIR KHANA PASS) FROM WHICH KABUL RESIDENTS COULD HEAR NIGHTLY OUTGOING ARTILLERY AND MULTIPLE ROCKET LAUNCHER FIRE.

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-- THE HUMAN COST: A HIGHLY RELIABLE, WELL-POSITIONED SOURCE REPORTS THAT THE FIGHTING PRODUCED "MANY THOUSANDS" OF REFUGEES IN THE ONCE RICH AGRICULTURAL AREA AND THAT CIVILIAN CASUALTIES WERE HEAVY. EYEWITNESSES REPORTED THAT MANY VILLAGERS FLED TO THE SALANG ROAD TO ESCAPE BOMBARDMENT OF THEIR VILLAGES. AROUND TWO THOUSAND WERE ABLE TO EVADE REGIME AND SOVIET EFFORTS TO BLOCK THEIR FLIGHT TO REFUGE IN KABUL. OTHERS REMAINED IN MAKESHIFT CAMPS BY THE ROAD.

A KUCHI (NOMAD) WHO TOOK HIS ANIMALS OUT OF THE SHAKADARA AREA INTO KABUL SAID THAT MOST OF THE LARGE EXTENDED FAMILY RESIDENTIAL COMPOUNDS THAT DOT THE LANDSCAPE AS WELL AS MOST OTHER STRUCTURES HAVE BEEN RUINED. MANY REPORTS TELL OF DESTRUCTION OF ORCHARDS, VINYARDS AND GARDENS. ACCORDING TO AFGHAN REPORTS, REFUGEES ATTEMPTING TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES DURING LULLS IN THE FIGHTING WERE PREVENTED FROM DOING SO.

--THE MUJAHIDIN: ACCORDING TO AFGHAN SOURCES IN CONTACT WITH MUJAHIDIN COMMANDERS, THE MUJAHIDIN SOUGHT TO ROTATE THEIR FORCES DURING THE BATTLE, SENDING IN FRESH TROOPS AGAINST SOVIET FORCES AND PERMITTING FRONTLINE TROOPS TO PULL BACK FOR RESUPPLY AND REST. REPORTEDLY MUJAHIDIN FROM AS FAR AWAY AS GHAZNI PROVINCE JOINED THE FIGHTING. DESPITE HEAVY BOMBARDMENT, MUJAHIDIN FORCES IN THE HILLS WEST OF SHAKADARA AND TO THE SOUTH IN PAGHMAN RETAINED THEIR HILL-CAMPS. THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT THE MUJAHIDIN HAD ADVANCE WORD OF THE SOVIET PUSH AS SUGGESTED BY THE MUJAHIDIN-DIRECTED PARTIAL EVACUATION OF CIVILIANS IN THE SHAKADARA AREA (ABOUT 2,000) PRIOR TO THE LAUNCHING OF THE SOVIET OFFENSIVE. IN ANY EVENT, MUJAHIDIN LOSSES WERE HEAVY IN SOME AREAS. ONE SHAKADARA RESIDENT REPORTS SEEING 20 MUJAHIDIN BODIES. AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT CLAIMS THE CAPTURE OF APPROXIMATELY 100 MUJAHIDIN IN A VILLAGE NEAR KABUL.

--SOVIET/DRA FORCES: SOVIET LOSSES APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN SIGNIFICANT. ONE SHOMALI RESIDENT TOLD A CONTACT OF SEEING FOUR HELICOPTERS MOVING SOVIET DEAD AND WOUNDED FROM MIR BACHAKOT EARLY IN THE FIGHTING (AUGUST 9). REPORTEDLY SOVIET EVACUATION OF DEAD AND WOUNDED WAS INITIALLY TO BAGRAM AIR BASE AND THEN DIRECTLY TO THE SOVIET UNION. (ACTIVITY AT THE MAIN SOVIET MILITARY HOSPITAL IN KABUL DID NOT INCREASE DRAMATICALLY DURING THE FIGHTING.) AFGHAN SOURCES REPORT 20 TANKS (POSSIBLY ARMORED VEHICLES) DESTROYED IN THE SHAKADARA AREA AND 12-15 IN THE QARABAGH AREA. A RELIABLE DIPLOMAT REPORTS THAT MUJAHIDIN USED MEGAPHONES TO APPEAL TO "TRUE MUSLIMS" AMONG THE DRA FORCES TO COME TO THE MUJAHIDIN SIDE. REPORTEDLY UPWARDS OF 300 DID NO.

--AIR LOSSES: AFGHAN REPORTS SUGGEST AIR LOSSES IN THE RANGE OF FOUR TO SEVEN AIRCRAFT DOWNED, WITH A

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SPECIFIC REPORT OF AN AIRCRAFT DOWNED IN THE SHAKADARA
AREA ON AUGUST 9.

(B) KABUL-TEST: AFGHAN SOURCES CONTINUE TO CLAIM (SUPPORTED
BY DIPLOMATS OBSERVATIONS)-THAT SOVIET/DRA FORCES HAVE
SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED THEIR USE OF AIRCRAFT, ESPECIALLY
HELICOPTERS, IN THE PAGHMAN AREA. DESPITE THIS, ACCORDING TO
ONE AFGHAN, MUJAHIDIN DOWNED ONE JET IN THE AREA ON AUGUST 7
AND A SECOND ON AUGUST 8. AFGHAN CIVILIANS AND A DRA OFFICER
STATE THAT SOVIET FORCES ARE STATIONED AT KARGHA
BUT NOT IN THE PAGHMAN AREA, ONLY MOVING
INTO AND OUT OF THE AREA FOR BRIEF OPERATIONS. AN AFGHAN
CLAIMS REGIME TROOPS MAN 170 POSTS IN THE PAGHMAN
AREA BUT THAT THEY VIRTUALLY NEVER ENGAGE THE
MUJAHIDIN AND, APPARENTLY IN TURN, GENERALLY ARE
NOT ATTACKED BY THEM. MUJAHIDIN. AN AFGHAN NOTES THAT
MUJAHIDIN AS OF AUGUST 6 HAD MOVED BACK INTO THE
BEKTUT AREA, FIVE KMS SOUTH OF PAGHMAN TOWN. AFGHAN SOURCES
REPORT THE FOLLOWING INCIDENTS:

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--AUGUST 7: SOVIET/DRA ARTILLERY PEPPERED THE PAGHMAN VALLEY WITH ARTILLERY AND MORTAR FIRE AT 0600.
--AUGUST 9: MUJAHIDIN ROCKETED THE KARGHA LAKE AREA, DOING NO DAMAGE. OVERNIGHT (1930-0300) SOVIET ARTILLERY IMPACTED IN THE RIDGE HIGH ABOVE PAGHMAN TOWN.
--AUGUST 10: MUJAHIDIN AGAIN ROCKETED KARGHA LAKE AREA, SCORING HITS ON SOVIET AND SARANDOI POSITIONS SOUTH OF THE LAKE. (ACCORDING TO A DRA OFFICER).
--AUGUST 11: MUJAHIDIN ROCKETED THE AREA OF KARGHA TOWN.
--AUGUST 14: HIGH ALTITUDE FIXED WING AIRCRAFT BOMBED THE PAGHMAN VALLEY OVERNIGHT. DIPLOMATS NOTED LARGE FLASHES IN THE DIRECTION OF PAGHMAN BETWEEN 2000 AND 2130. MUJAHIDIN DESTROYED TWO SOVIET ARMORED VEHICLES IN A AMBUSH AT KOTALI TAKHT (34°25'N 68°53'E).
(C) KABUL-EAST: A DIPLOMATIC SOURCE OF UNTESTED REPORTING RELIABILITY REPORTS THAT MUJAHIDIN DESTROYED HIGH-TENSION ELECTRIC LINES IN THE SORUBI AREA IN MID-JULY. IN THE ATTACK, MUJAHIDIN KILLED EIGHT DRA TROOPS AND WOUNDED 15. AN AFGHAN REPORTS MUJAHIDIN DESTRUCTION OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT AT MAH-I-PAR (34°39'N 69°42'E) IN LATE JULY. FINALLY, A SEPARATE AFGHAN REPORTS A MUJAHIDIN ATTACK ON A DRA POST NEAR PUL-I-CHARKHI AUGUST 9.

7. KANDAHAR: A KANDAHAR RESIDENT SAID THAT AS OF EARLY AUGUST FIGHTING AROUND THE CITY HAD DIMINISHED AND THAT THE MUJAHIDIN STILL REMAINED IN THE AREAS THE SOVIET AND DRA FORCES HAD SOUGHT TO DRIVE THEM FROM: ARGANDAB AND MALAJAT. THEY ALSO REMAINED IN PASHMUL. THE CIVILIAN POPULATION OF ALL THREE AREAS HAD BEEN MUCH REDUCED WITH YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE MOST PART FLEEING TO PAKISTAN WHILE THE OLDER PEOPLE SOUGHT REFUGE INSIDE KANDAHAR. OVERALL THE KANDAHARI JUDGED THE MUJAHIDIN TO BE STRONGER IN THE KANDAHAR AREA THAN A YEAR AGO.

8. GHAZNI: AN AFGHAN SOURCE REPORTS THAT ON AUGUST 7 SOVIET AND MUJAHIDIN FORCES FOUGHT FOR 24 HOURS IN THE VICINITY OF TOURGHAN (10 KMS WEST OF GHAZNI CITY). SOVIET FORCES SUFFERED THREE ARMORED VEHICLES DESTROYED AND 21 TROOPS WOUNDED OR KILLED. MUJAHIDIN CASUALTIES WERE TWO WOUNDED AND THREE DEAD. A SEPARATE SOURCE CLAIMS THAT GHAZNI CITY WHILE SAFE DURING THE DAY IS DANGEROUS AT NIGHT BECAUSE OF MUJAHIDIN ACTIVITY WITHIN THE CITY. THIS AFGHAN, A NATIVE OF GHAZNI, CLAIMS THAT BOTH THE NASR AND SEPAH, IRAN-BACKED MUJAHIDIN ORGANIZATIONS, ARE STRONG IN THE AREA AND SOMETIMES CLASH WITH EACH OTHER. THE EXISTING HAZARAJAT COUNCIL IS WEAK AND CAN NOT OFFER A POLITICAL ALTERNATIVE TO THE TWO PARTIES. THE NASR, SAID TO BE A BRUTAL GROUP, REPORTEDLY CONTROL JAGHORI. THE SOURCE SAID THAT A DRA POST PREVIOUSLY WAS LOCATED AT THE LATTER POINT BUT THAT IT WAS ABANDONED RECENTLY WHEN IT BECAME UNTENABLE BECAUSE OF THE MUJAHIDIN THREAT.

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9. PARCHAN: A CHARIKAR RESIDENT SAID THAT IN EARLY JULY THERE HAD BEEN HEAVY SOVIET-MUJAHIDIN FIGHTING NEAR CHARIKAR. HE ADDED THAT REGIME FORCES CONTROL ONLY AN AREA WITHIN THREE KMS OF THE CITY CENTER. THE REST OF THE AREA IS CONTROLLED BY THE MUJAHIDIN. THERE IS FIGHTING AROUND THE CITY HEARD DURING THE DAY AND FIGHTING IN THE CITY AT NIGHT. THE MAJOR MUJAHIDIN LEADER IN THE AREA IS MU'ALEM FATEH (A FORMER ENGLISH TEACHER WHO BELONGS TO THE HEZBI ISLAMI (GULBUDDIN)). A JAMIAT COMMANDER NAMED HAJI KHAWA IS THE SECOND MOST IMPORTANT COMMANDER IN THE AREA. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO ARE COOL, BUT BETTER THAN DURING THE PREVIOUS YEAR. THE REGIME CIVIL LEADER IN THE AREA IS A PARCHAMI WHILE HIS RIVAL THE MILITARY COMMANDER IS A KHALQI. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO REPORTEDLY ARE STRAINED. ACCHE CHARIKAR RESIDENT, 90 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION WOULD FAVOR THE RETURN OF THE KING.

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10. WARDAK: AN AFGHAN AND A DIPLOMATIC SOURCE REPORT THAT SOVIET FORCES ARE SURROUNDED AND CUT OFF FROM SUPPORT AT MATUAN (34°28'N 68°44'E) LOCATED WEST OF MAIDAN SHAR. ACCORDING TO THE AFGHAN SOURCE, THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO REMOVE THEIR DEAD AND WOUNDED. A THIRD REPORT CLAIMS THAT SOVIET FORCES ARE PREPARING TO TRY TO RECAPTURE BASES IN THE MAIDAN AREA.

11. LOGAR: TWO AFGHAN SOURCES REPORT HEAVY SOVIET/DRA BOMBING IN LOGAR AUGUST 9. ONE SOURCE CITES MODARA AND DEH NAU AS PRINCIPAL TARGETS WHILE THE SECOND INCLUDES BARAKI BARAK.

12. PAKTIKA: A RELIABLE AFGHAN SOURCE CLAIMS THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO AIR SERVICE TO URGUN FOR THREE MONTHS. HE ATTRIBUTED THIS TO THE THREAT POSED BY MUJAHIDIN ANTI-AIR DEFENSES IN THE AREA.

13. PAKTIA: A REGULAR AFGHAN SOURCE REPORTS THAT ON AUGUST 12 EIGHT TO TEN DRA CASUALTIES (WOUNDED AND DEAD) WERE BROUGHT TO THE WAZIR AKBAR KHAN MILITARY HOSPITAL FROM FIGHTING IN THE JAJI AREA.

14. TAKHAR: AN UNTESTED AFGHAN SOURCE REPORTS THAT IN HEAVY FIGHTING AT KATAGHAN (PHONETIC) NEAR THE AFGHAN-SOVIET BORDER SOVIET FORCES SUFFERED HEAVY LOSSES IN FIGHTING WITH TROOPS LOYAL TO MASOOD IN EARLY-MID JULY.

15. BAGHLAN: AN AFGHAN REPORTS CHRONIC FIGHTING AUDIBLE IN BAGHLAN, AROUND THE CITY.

16. JAUZJAN: AN AFGHAN FROM JAUZJAN REPORT THAT MUJAHIDIN CONTROL THE AQCHA-TO-SHEBERGAN ROAD AND THAT AT THE END OF JULY THE MUJAHIDIN ATTACKED AQCHA. ONE HELICOPTER WAS DOWNED IN THE FIGHTING.

17. BADKHSHAN: AN AFGHAN CLAIMS CONSTANT FIGHTING AROUND FAYZABAD DURING THE DAY AND INSIDE THE CITY AT NIGHT.

18. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS:

(A) BOMB(S) IN SHARE NAU: A RELIABLE DIPLOMATIC SOURCE REPORTS THAT THE BOMB (OR POSSIBLY BOMBS) WHICH EXPLODED IN SHARE NAU AUGUST 8 PARA 4, REFTEL WERE WITHIN A MOTOR REPAIR SHOP. THE EXPLOSION(S) CAUSED NO CASUALTIES. THE OWNER OF THE SHOP WAS ARRESTED ON SUSPICION OF POSSESSING EXPLOSIVE DEVICES.

(B) ROAD SECURITY/CONDITIONS: A RECENT TRAVELER BETWEEN KABUL AND GHAZNI COMMENTED THAT THERE ARE NO SOVIET TROOPS POSTED ON THE ROAD BUT THAT MUJAHIDIN OCCASIONALLY CHECK TRAFFIC ALONG THE ROUTE. A SEPARATE TRAVELER BETWEEN KABUL AND JALALABAD DESCRIBED THAT ROAD AS IN VERY BAD CONDITION... ALL

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19. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

(A) KESHTMAND TO MOSCOW: MULTIPLE REPORTS FROM USUALLY RELIABLE SOURCES, INCLUDING EAST BLOC DIPLOMATS, CLAIM THAT PRIME MINISTER KESHTMAND, FOLLOWING POLITBURO CONSIDERATION OF THE RESULTS OF NAJIB'S CONSULTATIONS IN MOSCOW, HIMSELF LEFT FOR MOSCOW AUGUST 15. ANALYSTS IN KABUL BELIEVE THE PRIME MINISTER MAY HAVE GONE TO MOSCOW EITHER TO PRESS PDPA VIEWS ON THE "NEW STEPS" (WHICH SOVIET AND DRA MEDIA REPORTED WERE DISCUSSED BETWEEN NAJIB AND GORBACHEV) OR TO ADDRESS ISSUES RELATED TO THE SEPTEMBER PDPA PARTY CONFERENCE.

(B) DRA MEDIA UNDERGOING CUTBACKS: AN EAST BLOC DIPLOMAT REPORTS THAT OVER THE PAST YEAR DRA PRINT MEDIA HAVE EXPERIENCED A TWENTY TO THIRTY PERCENT CUTBACK, INCLUDING REDUCED CIRCULATION FOR SOME PUBLICATIONS AND THE ELIMINATION OF OTHERS, PARTICULARLY SMALL PROVINCIAL WEEKLIES AND DAILIES. THE CUT BACKS REPORTEDLY GROW OUT OF DIMINISHED FUNDING AND A REALIZATION THAT THE ACTUAL READERSHIP FOR THE PUBLICATIONS IS LIMITED.

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20. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS:

(A) KABUL AIRPORT FUEL SHORTAGES: CANCELLATION OF THE (AUGUST 13) THURSDAY FLIGHT OF INDIAN AIRLINES TO KABUL (ONE OF TWO FLIGHTS PER WEEK), ACCORDING TO WELL SOURCED REPORTS, WAS CAUSED BY FUEL SHORTAGES IN KABUL. SOURCES AT INDIAN AIRLINES CONFIRM THAT THE AIRCRAFT DID NOT DEPART NEW DELHI BECAUSE IT COULD NOT BE REFUELED IN KABUL AND THE RETURN SLIGHT WOULD HAVE REQUIRED MORE FUEL THAN THE AIRCRAFT COULD CARRY FROM NEW DELHI. (COMMENT: FIGHTING IN THE SHORALI BLOCKED MOST TRAFFIC ON THE SALANG ROAD FOR MORE THAN ONE WEEK. THIS, PLUS HEAVY USE OF AVIATION FUEL DURING THE SOVIET RESULTS IN MAJOR REDUCTIONS IN FUEL STOCKS IN THE AREA. END COMMENT)

(B) BUSINESSMEN RESIST REGIME EMBRACE: AN AFGHAN BUSINESSMAN EXPLAINED THAT HE AND OTHER BUSINESSMEN ARE RESISTING REGIME OFFERS OF LOANS BECAUSE OF FEARS ABOUT REGIME INTERFERENCE IN THEIR FIRMS ONCE THE LOANS ARE ACCEPTED.

(C) AFGHANI-DOLLAR EXCHANGE RATE: THE DOLLAR CURRENTLY BUYS 173 AFGHAN IS.

21. HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS: A RELIABLE DIPLOMATIC SOURCE REPORTS TWO INSTANCES OF ATTEMPTS BY AFGHAN FAMILIES TO BRIBE REGIME OFFICIALS TO SECURE THE RETURN OF FAMILY MEMBERS FROM THE FIGHTING IN KANDAHAR. ONE AFGHAN CITED A FIGURE OF 25,000 AFGHANIS TO SECURE THE RELEASE OF A SON. A SECOND AFGHAN INDICATED A SIMILAR FIGURE FOR THE SAME PURPOSE.

21. KABUL MEDIA:

(A) NAJIB RETURNS: TELEVISION AND PRINT MEDIA COVERED NAJIB'S AUGUST 10 RETURN TO KABUL FROM WHAT IS STILL DESCRIBED AS A "SHORT VISIT" TO THE SOVIET UNION. SHOWN GREETING HIM WERE FULL AND ALTERNATE MEMBERS OF THE POLITBURO AND SECRETARIES OF THE CC, INCLUDING PRIME MINISTER KESHMAND AND INTERIOR MINISTER GULABZOI WHO HAD BEEN LARGELY OUT OF PUBLIC VIEW SINCE NAJIB DEPARTED FOR MOSCOW JULY 19.

(B) INDIAN-AFGHAN FRIENDSHIP: NIGHTLY TELEVISION NEWS HAS BEGUN RUNNING A SPECIAL SEGMENT DEALING WITH INDIAN-AFGHAN ACTIVITIES. THE SEGMENT IS INTRODUCED BY A GRAPHIC

OF BOTH FLAGS AND A STATEMENT ABOUT INDIAN-AFGHAN FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION. ALTHOUGH MUCH OF THE NEWS IN THIS SEGMENT CONCERNED EVENTS RELATING TO THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF INDIAN INDEPENDENCE, REPORTS ALSO DEALT WITH THE INAUGURATION OF INDIAN-AFGHAN FRIENDSHIP HALLS AT SCHOOLS AND FACTORIES, ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND THE LIKE. PRINT MEDIA AS WELL HAVE BEEN DEVOTING INCREASING COVERAGE TO ALL FACETS OF

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INDIAN-AFGHAN RELATIONS.

(C) AN-26 DOWNED IN PAKTIA: COMPARED TO PREVIOUS ALLEGED DOWNINGS OF AN-26 AIRCRAFT-BY GROUND-TO-AIR MISSILES, COVERAGE OF THE AUGUST 10 INCIDENT IN DARA MANGAL DIVISION OF PAKTIA PROVINCE WHERE FIVE CREW AND SEVEN PASSENGERS DIED WHEN AN AN-26 CRASHED HAS BEEN MUTED. THERE HAVE NOT BEEN THE FUNERALS, SCENES OF WRECKAGE, NOR ANGRY DENUNCIATIONS WHICH CHARACTERIZED MEDIA COVERAGE IN THE PAST.

(D) FOUR KILLED IN FIGHTING IN URUZGAN PROVINCE: PRESS DESPATCHES DATED AUGUST 02 REPORT THAT FOUR WERE KILLED IN A ROCKET ATTACK ON TARIN KOT, URUZGAN PROVINCE.

22. AT APPROXIMATELY 0915 ON AUGUST 17, A SOVIET SOLDIER ON "FRUIT BAZAAR" STREET STRANGLERED TO DEATH A YOUNG BOY WHO WAS WATCHING A SHOP FOR ITS OWNER. THE SOVIET SOLDIER REPORTEDLY STRANGLERED THE BOY AS HE ATTEMPTED TO PREVENT THE SOLDIER FROM STEALING ITEMS FROM THE STORE.

THE SOVIET SHOT AN OLDER BOY WHO RAN TO THE YOUNGER'S ASSISTANCE, THEN FLED THE SCENE. AS OF 1100 PORTIONS OF THE STREET WERE STILL CONDONED OFF BY SOVIET AND REGIME SECURITY. THERE APPEAR TO BE SCORES OF WITNESSES TO THE TRAGEDY WHICH HAPPENED IN THE CROWDED STREET. FOUR SHOPKEEPERS AND THREE OF THE VICTIM'S FELLOW URCHINS PROVIDED GRAPHIC AND NEAR IDENTICAL ACCOUNTS OF THE INCIDENT (PROTECT -- TO EMBOFF WHO VISITED SCENE WITHIN MINUTES).

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RUEORDF/DIRAFMIC FT DETRICK MD//IS//

RUCJAAA/USCINCRD MACDILL AFB FL

RUWSAAA/MAC INTEL CEN SCOTT AFB IL//INO//

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RUCLAKA/COR4THPSYOP GP FT BRAGG NC//AFVS-POG-E-SSD//

RUCIAEA/FTD WRIGHT PATTERSON AFB OH//SIIR//

RULWIOC/HQ SAC OFFUTT AFB NE//INOO//

RUEDBIA/CDR513THMIGP FT MONMOUTH NJ//IAM-IC-O//

RHCGSRB/COMUSARCENT FT MCPHERSON GA//AFRO-DSO//

RHHM3RA/CINCPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI

RUCLAKA/CDR8THPSYOPBN FT BRAGG NC

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 3896

RUEFNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 5597

RUEH/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6929

INFO RUEHUU/AFGHAN WAR COLLECTIVE

RUEHIA/USIA WASHDC 1830

RUFHCH/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1912

RUFHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 1371

RUSNNOA/USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

RUCLAKA/FT BRAGG NC AFVS//POE//SB

RUMGHQA/CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

RUFDAAA/CINIUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GE

RHFQAAA/HQ USAF RAMSTEIN AB GE

RHFQAAA/HQ USAF RAMSTEIN AB GE//INCO

RUDORRA/USNMR SHAPE BE//I TAFF//

RUIJACC/USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CIJ2-10M//

RUEOLEA/DEFENSE COMMUNICATION SUPPORT GROUP

RUCLFNA/347 TFW MOODY AFB GA//IN//

RUFNSHH/USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

RUEOAYB/FSTC INTEL OPS CHARLOTTESVILLE VA//AIAST-IO/CHI//

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23. ERRATA: THE KOKCHA-IRRIGATION PROJECT REFERRED TO IN PAR 19 D, SITREP FOR 7/27-8/2, IS LOCATED IN TAKHAR (VICE BADKHSAN) PROVINCE. LOCATION OF DAMDAM MENTIONED INARA 12, SITREP FOR 8/3-9, IS AT (32°32'N 62°56'E) (CORRECTED GRID REFERENCE).

24. OT TO BE BRIEFED TO PRESS:

(A) DRA LEADERS CONCERNED OVER FLOW OF ARMS NORTH:

A CHIEF OF MISSION WITH EXCELLENT ACCESS TO SENIOR DRA LEADERS PROTRAYS THEM AS A VERY WORRIED OVER THE UNIMPEDED FLOW OF WEAPONS TO MUJAHIDIN BASED IN AFGHANISTAN'S NORTHERN TIER OR PROVINCES. REPORTEDLY THERE IS VIRTUALLY NO INTERDICTION OF THE FLOW. (COMMENT: THE REDUCED USE OF HELICOPTERS, REFLECTING THE THREAT POSED BY STINGERS, PROBABLY EXPLAINS THE INCREASING EASE OF RESUPPLY OF NORTHERN UNITS.)

(B) REPORTS OF CBW USE IN GHAZNI: AN AFGHAN WHO HAS REPORTED RELIABLY IN THE PAST ON DEVELOPMENTS IN GHAZNI CLAIMS THAT ON APPROXIMATELY AUGUST 8, SOVIET FORCES EMPLOYED CBW/TOXIN WEAPONS AGAINST MUJAHIDIN OP??TING IN THE RADZA VALLEY, APPROXIMATELY SIX KMS NORTHEAST OF GHAZNI CITY. MUJAHIDIN SUFFERED 15-20 CASUALTIES, INCLUDING SOME FATALITIES. A SEPARATE SOURCE CLAIMS THAT A RELATIVE IN THE JAGHORI AREA OF GHAZNI DIED OF MYSTERIOUS CAUSES THREE TO FOUR YEARS AGO. THE VICTIM'S SKIN RAPIDLY TURNED BLACK BUT THERE WERE NO OTHER INDICATIONS OF WHAT HAD KILLED HIM.

(C) WAKIL GRAVELY ILL?: AN EAST BLOC DIPLOMAT CLAIMS THAT FOREIGN MINISTER WAKIL IS SUFFERING FROM CANCER. MFA CONTACTS CONCEDE THAT WAKIL IS ILL BUT CLAIM CONTINUING COMPLICATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH AN APPENDIX OPERATION IN EARLY JUNE.

(D) MFA OFFICIALS OPTIMISTIC ON UN VOTE: MFA OFFICIALS HAVE TOLD DIPLOMATS THAT THEY EXPECT TO PICK UP ABOUT TEN VOTES ON THIS YEAR'S UNGA AFGHANISTAN RESOL??N. SEPARATELY AN MFA OFFICER CLAIMS THAT THREE TO FOUR NEW EMBASSIES WILL OPEN IN KABUL OVER THE NEXT YEAR. (HE WOULD NOT BE DRAWN OUT ON WHICH STATES INTENDED TO OPEN MISSIONS.)

(E) UNICEF SETS INOCULATION PROGRAM IN MOTION: UNICEF HAS BEGUN EXPENDING FUNDS IN SUPPORT OF ITS PLAN TO LAUNCH ITS INOCULATION PROJECT IN THREE PROVINCES.

(F) DRA AIRLINE TO FLY TO KUWAIT: THE DRA'S BAKHTAR AIRLINES WILL COMMENCE FLIGHTS BETWEEN KABUL AND KUWAIT IN THE NEAR FUTURE, ACCORDING TO KNOWLEDGEABLE SOURCES. KUWAIT WILL BE THE NEW TERMINUS OF THE WEEKLY BAKHTAR FLIGHTS TO DUBAI. REPORTEDLY, ALL AGREEMENTS ARE SIGNED.

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25. MOSCOW MINIMIZE CONSIDERED.

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